

SHELBY COUNTY

Honorable James R. Kramer

Shelby County Courthouse
P.O. Box 1115
Columbiana, AL 35051
(205) 669-3730



Karen Musgrove
Dana Ray
Susan Seng
Chris Monceret
Debra Roulaine
Helen Rardin
Wonda Moore
Melody Crawford
Karla Stagner
Pam Callaghan
Phil Cain
Carol Bruser
Reid Lochamy
Michael Smith
Jill Lee
Allen Wade
Gary Bradley
Rickey Darby
Mary Gomillion
George Dailey
Liz Stewart
Leigh Cohen Long
Ann Carr
Mo Canady
Jackie Austin

Jo Veal Turner
Barbara Williams
Chrissy Snead
Jerry Levin
Leigh Hardin
Greg Shiver
Coleman White
Agela Webb
Sandra Watson
Sonja Shaneyfelt
Cindy Sirmon
Ken Mobley
Charles Stroud
Mac Stinson
Denni Stewart
Elton B. Stephens, Jr.
Sherry Whithead
Tracey Swinney
Donna Mazur
Katrinia Brown
Dianne Matherson
Kay Wideman
Winnie Lowe-Davis
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Jack Mundy
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Cindi Tapscott
April Wortham
Rene Williams
Jan McDuff
Martha Lamberth
Krista Kuykendall
Gerie Kelley
Suan Johnston
Shane Howard
Julie Mihalopoulo
Sylvia Lowery
Carol Dotson
Deborah Thomas
Allison Kluz
Ed Earnest
Greg Lancaster
Ziva Hatcher

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Health Insurance

Policy Council Action Steps:

- identify service gaps
- publicize needs and efforts to increase and sustain enrollment
- support legislative actions surrounding insurance coverage

Child Health Care

Policy Council Action Steps:

- collaborate with health department and other agencies to prepare for health fair
- work with local schools, churches and agencies to publicize health fair
- continue community information/outreach efforts for insurance availability for children
- increase accessibility for medical services for low income/diverse/ESL populations

Availability of Mental Health Care

Policy Council Action Steps:

- identify service gaps
- establish SED committee to address needs and gaps
- collaborate with local mental health agencies, nonprofits and faith based agencies to provide access to services for children and their families
- increase accessibility for mental health services for low income/diverse/ESL population through Family Resource Center
- develop community outreach efforts and information for hard to reach families
- develop resource manual

Availability of Mental Health Care

Policy Council Action Steps:

- identify service gaps
- work with local DHR, Juvenile Court and Mental Health agencies for quality assurance of service providers
- collaborate with local service providers, residential agencies and treatment facilities to streamline care without duplicating services
- provide ongoing training, cross training for service providers through workshops and seminars

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

School Safety

Policy Council Action Steps:

- increase number of Behavioral Specialists available in Shelby County Schools
- create directory of available resources for parents of at risk youth
- distribute resource books and What Parents Need To Know books within the schools
- increase number of parenting classes that are identified for parents of at-risk youth

Safe Communities

Policy Council Action Steps:

- collaborate with Shelby County Coalition for Drug Free Communities to increase distribution of What Parents Need to Know books
- increase availability/number of parenting classes for parents of at-risk youth
- provide education/prevention programs on sexually transmitted diseases and cancer development risks
- provide education/prevention/cessation programs on tobacco usage
- identify 4 areas in Shelby County with high populations of delinquency
- work with local agencies, Youth Advisory Council, non-profits and schools in developing after school programs for youth 14-17
- locate funding
- publicize efforts

Education - Children

learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Substance Abuse Prevention Shelby County Board of Education has seen an overall improvement in schools for substance abuse/usage; however, Middle School students have been identified as being in need of services/programs that address prevention and intervention

Policy Council Action Steps:

- collaboration between local mental health, Shelby County Coalition for Drug Free Communities, Shelby County Board of Education and other local agencies to address substance abuse education, prevention and intervention programs
- increase parent involvement through parenting classes, after school programs and mentoring for at-risk youth
- locate and apply for continued funding for programs that address substance abuse prevention and intervention

Delinquency Prevention

Policy Council Action Steps:

- recruit youth from Shelby County Schools for Youth Advisory Council
- locate resources for incentives for youth who participate in Youth Advisory Council
- select on countywide project for Youth Advisory Council to participate in

Early Care and

Education - Children

(0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Parent Involvement and Skills - Parents and

guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Shelby County families would benefit from increasing their knowledge and confidence in parenting skills to give their child the best possible start in life

Policy Council Action Steps:

- develop a brochure listing parenting resources in Shelby County
 - encourage continued distribution of parenting kits through birthing hospitals in Shelby County
 - support operation of the Family Resource Center in Vincent
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Policy Recommendation

1. Continue to pull down the state match for the CCDFBG.
2. Create a cohesive system to address quality childcare standards, i.e. quality rating system for Alabama.
3. Develop a state tax credit for dependent care expenses that are reimbursed based on the level of quality care provided.
4. Establish an on-line statewide resource directory of services for families and children.
5. Facilitate dialogue and partnerships among local and state agencies that serve families and children.
6. Compulsory education beginning at age 5.
7. State funded universal pre-k for Alabama's 4 year olds.

Additional Shelby County Children's Policy Council Members:

Brenda Pylant

Evan Major

Penny Kakoliris

Amanda Johnson

Mark Hall

Anne Hartline

Jan Hoffmann

Michelle Aliff

Reggie Holloway

Jim Finn

Michael Lann

Karen Stokes

Steve Anderson

Judith Berryhill

Tim Billingsley

Mike Holiman

Patricia Smith

Carol Horton

Keith Brown

Carrie Bowman

Lori Blanton

Ann Mingus Comer

Mac McGuire

David B. Hall, III

John Miller

Alison Kluz

Catherine House

Alan Dodson

James Jones